

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) A silencer for a vacuum cleaner, which comprises at least one hermetic expansion chamber ~~(1)~~ mounted in an exhaust channel of the vacuum cleaner and allowing an exhaust airflow from the vacuum cleaner to pass through, the expansion chamber having opposite sides spaced apart from each other in the direction of the exhaust airflow, the expansion chamber ~~(1)~~ at ~~its two~~ said opposite sides having an inlet and an outlet respectively connected to the exhaust channel, ~~and the cross-sectional area of the expansion chamber (1) in the direction perpendicular to the airflow is being larger than that of each of the inlet (2) and the outlet (3), and a plurality of apertures being drilled around the circumference of each of the inlet and the outlet.~~
2. (currently amended) A silencer for a vacuum cleaner according to claim 1 wherein a silencing board ~~(4)~~ is mounted in the expansion chamber ~~(1)~~, separating the inlet ~~(2)~~ from the outlet ~~(3)~~, with a plurality of pores ~~(5)~~ distributed throughout in the silencing board ~~(4)~~.
3. (currently amended) A silencer for a vacuum cleaner according to Claims 1 or 2 wherein the expansion chamber ~~(1)~~ is formed by two halves that are oppositely conjoined to each other at a joint, and the silencing board is fixed at the joint.
4. (currently amended) A silencer for a vacuum cleaner according to Claims 1 ~~or 2~~ wherein the distances from two inner end faces of the expansion chamber ~~(1)~~, which contain the inlet ~~(2)~~ and the outlet ~~(3)~~ respectively, to the silencing board ~~(4)~~ are both longer than 10 mm and shorter than 100 mm.
5. (currently amended) A silencer for a vacuum cleaner according to Claim 1 wherein the cross-sectional area of the expansion chamber ~~(1)~~ in the direction perpendicular to the airflow is larger than double of that of the outlet ~~(3)~~.

6. (currently amended) A silencer for a vacuum cleaner according to Claim 1 wherein a noise-absorbing material is attached to inner walls of the expansion chamber ~~(1)~~.

7. (currently canceled).

8. (currently amended) A silencer for a vacuum cleaner according to Claim 1 wherein the cross-sectional areas of the inlet ~~(2)~~ and the outlet ~~(3)~~ in the direction perpendicular to the airflow are both less than 5000 mm².